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ABSTRACT

This handbook is intended to provide school officials and members of school councils and advisory committees with helpful information about different ways to plan for school improvement. It focuses on the process of planning, rather than on the process of writing a plan, and therefore does not include any planning forms or instructions for using such forms. Separate sections of the handbook examine the planning process in general, describe three different planning models that are applicable to schools, and discuss what school improvement is and what the planning process should accomplish. Most of the handbook describes in turn the three planning models, which include the component development model, the integrated program model, and the u-do-it model. (JG)

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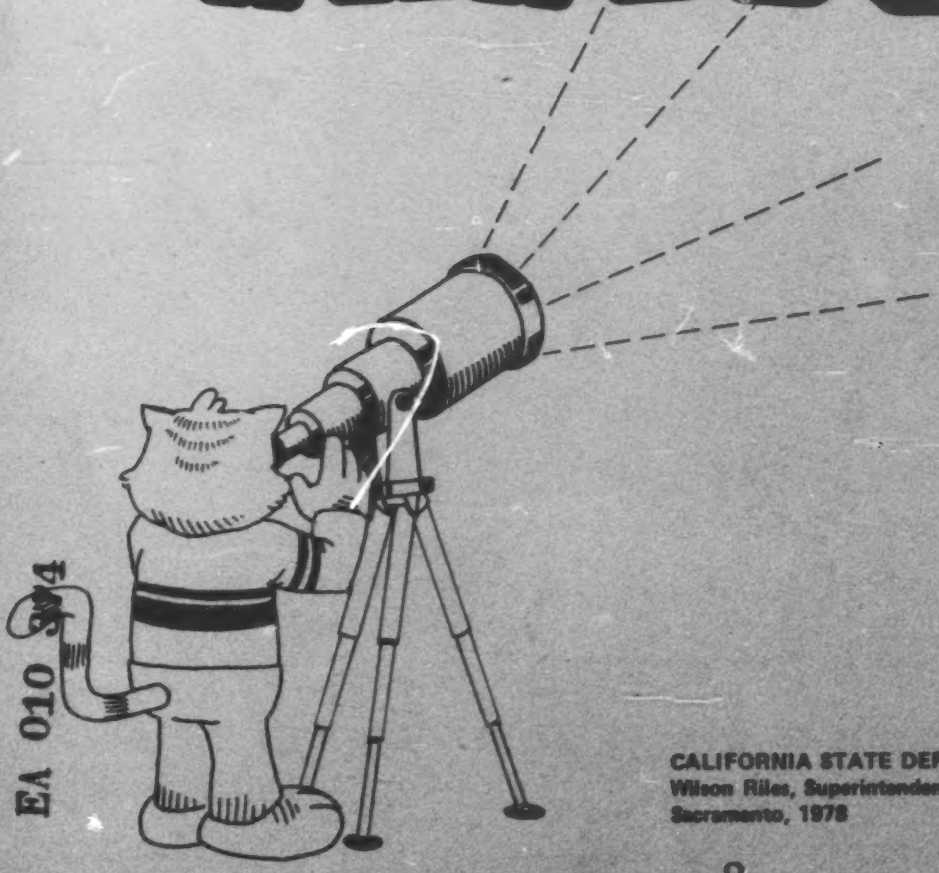
# PLANNING HANDBOOK



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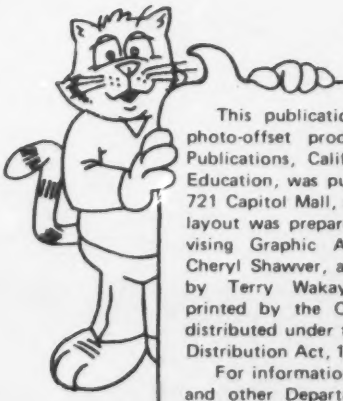

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For information on ordering this handbook and other Department of Education publications, see page 63.

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# INTRODUCTION

### Why This Handbook Was Written

This planning handbook was designed in the hope that you might have more information and help at your fingertips about different ways to plan for school improvement. It describes the process of planning, NOT the process of writing a plan. The forms and the instructions for completing the forms to be used in the planning process are separate from this handbook.

### What This Handbook Does

- It defines good planning.
- It describes three different planning models or options so that you can choose the one that will work best for your school.
- It discusses what school improvement is so that you will know what a good planning process should help you do.

### Who This Handbook Is For

It should be particularly helpful to elementary and secondary school site councils and advisory committees. School administrators, staff members, parents, students, community members, and district administrators are all potential readers and users of the handbook. The pronoun "you" is used throughout and should be defined by those reading the handbook. "You" can refer to a council, subcommittee, small group, and so forth.

### Other Department Resources Related to Planning

*Discussion Guide for the California School Improvement Program*

*Establishing School Site Councils*

*Guide for Ongoing Planning*

*Technical Assistance Guide for Proficiency Assessment*

# 1. THE PLANNING PROCESS

## Why Plan?

Since planning and writing plans take time, energy, and effort, you may be asking the question, "Why should we plan, and what can we gain from it?"

Well, that is a fair question. In fact, if you are already thinking about how you spend your time, you are already into planning. Planning is not new to you. It is something that happens all the time, although not always consciously. With more trials, errors, and successes, planning becomes more deliberate and ongoing.

Planning is vital to all schools because it helps build better programs for students. It does this by helping you to:

- Decide how and where to set priorities in the use of limited human and economic resources.
- Decide how to accomplish not only your short-range goals, but also your medium and long-range goals.
- Build on the strong and successful parts of the program, as well as to identify and improve the weak parts.
- Reach agreement in the school community about what to do and how to do it.

Using a deliberate method of planning is certainly better than just having your fingers crossed when the future of students is at stake. The next few pages will help you know good planning when you see it.

# Now You See It . . .

**What a Good Planning Process Is**

- It is organized thinking that helps in deciding what needs to be done, how it will happen, and who will do it.
- It is the setting of priorities in the use of resources: people, money, time, and materials.
- It is trying to anticipate the future.
- It is involving those affected by the results of planning and opening communication channels.
- It is adapting and modifying steps or processes until they work for you.
- It is using leadership to motivate people and to coordinate their activities.
- It is reflecting on what has been planned already and how it is working.
- It includes the periodic recording of planning decisions for future reference.

**What a Good Planning Process Should Do**

- It should stimulate change and improvement.
- It should help you figure out *what* will happen and *how* it should happen.
- It should raise awareness about what is being done and why.
- It should build a trail of activities over time so you can look at what has worked well and what has not.
- It should produce a blueprint, road map, or recipe to be used.
- It should decrease fear about the process of change and its results.



# Now You Don't

**What a Good Planning Process Is Not**

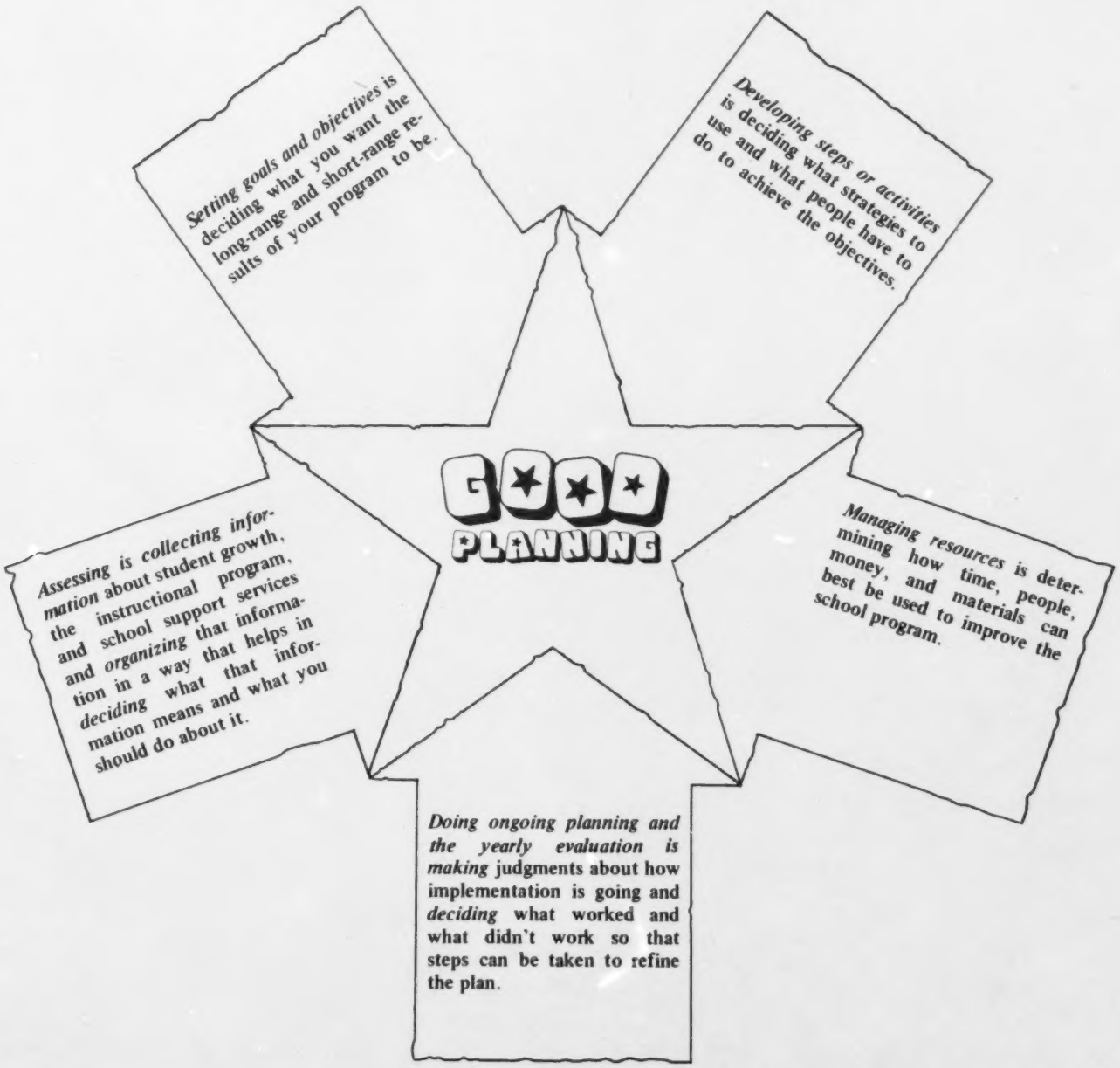
- It is not merely writing a plan or filling out forms.
- It is not using steps or processes that don't work.
- It is not involving people without considering their ideas.
- It is not deciding what to do without figuring out how it will happen.
- It is not letting the program guide and coordinate itself.

**What a Good Planning Process Should Not Do**

- It should not make planning more important than everything else you do—teaching, administering, or parenting, for instance.
- It should not result in a process or a plan that is rigid and inflexible.
- It should not result in a process that has not been adapted to your school's particular needs.
- It should not focus your attention on only one aspect of the program, excluding all others.

# What Goes into Good Planning?

Good school planning helps you look at what's happening for students and helps you make the best decisions about how to improve the school program. There are different processes that will work well, but any good planning process includes the following elements. You will notice that there is no particular order to these elements since different schools may approach planning differently.


*Setting goals and objectives* is deciding what you want the long-range and short-range results of your program to be.
*Developing steps or activities* is deciding what strategies to use and what people have to do to achieve the objectives.
GOOD PLANNING
*Assessing is collecting information* about student growth, the instructional program, and school support services and *organizing* that information in a way that helps in *deciding* what that information means and what you should do about it.
*Managing resources* is determining how time, people, money, and materials can best be used to improve the school program.
*Doing ongoing planning and the yearly evaluation is making* judgments about how implementation is going and *deciding* what worked and what didn't work so that steps can be taken to refine the plan.

# "Shoulds" for Planning

When you think about how the different elements of the planning process are defined, you will probably have the following questions:

***What do we assess?***

Your assessment should look at:

- What students know and what skills they have
- What skills and knowledge you want students to have
- What current instructional activities are designed to help students gain these skills and knowledge
- How effective the school program is and why
- What you want the program to look like
- How effectively your resources are being used
- What resources are needed for improving the school

***What kinds of objectives should we develop?***

You should develop objectives about:

- The skills and knowledge students should gain from the program
- What the program should look like
- What is expected of adults

***What types of steps or activities should we develop?***

You should plan steps or activities that identify:

- Strategies adults will use to make the program work
- What students will be doing
- How and when human and program resources will be used and organized
- What training and support the adults will receive



***How should we manage our resources?***

As you plan, keep these resource questions in mind:

- What skills and talents do adults have, and how can they be put to best use?
- Will more people or people with different skills be needed to make the program work?
- What amount of time do you have, and how can it be put to best use?
- What type of staff development or training will be needed, and what will it cost?
- What materials will you need, and how much will they cost?
- Are you choosing the most economic way to do what you want to do?
- Anything that has happened that was not planned—either successful or unsuccessful
- Key issues or concerns you have about the program

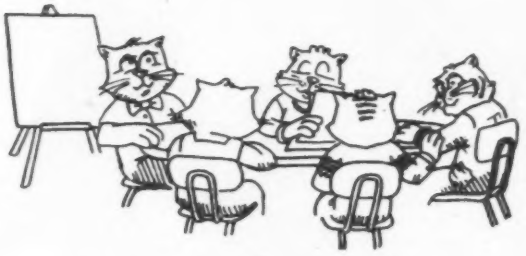
***What should we look at as we are evaluating our program?***

Your evaluation should look at:

- The quality of the program for students
- How fully you are achieving your objectives
- The extent to which planned activities have happened and how well they have worked

# Comparing the Planning Process to Writing the Plan

At various times during the planning process, you will write down portions of the plan. Writing the plan is only one activity in the broad process of planning, and you should not make it the *only* or even the most important activity. There are some important differences between the planning process and the writing activity that you should keep in mind.



**Planning Process**

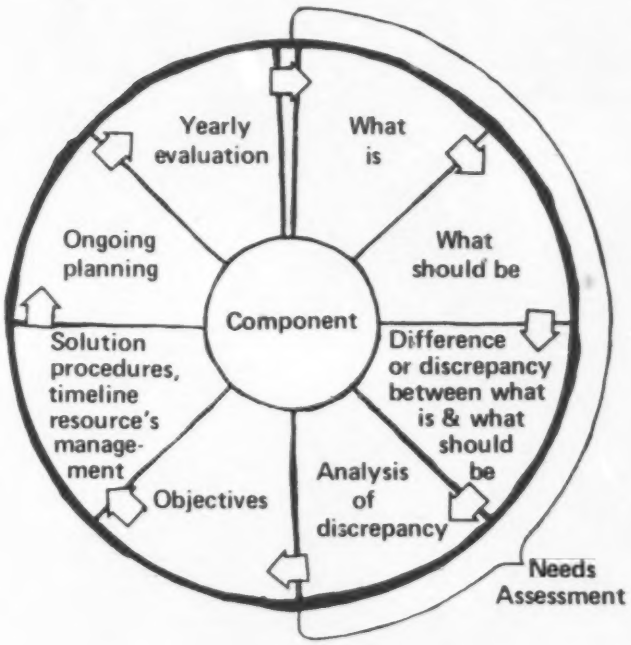
- You will probably spend time and energy deciding how to organize the planning and how to involve people in the process.
- You will think about and decide on the type of planning process to use (see Section II of this handbook) and the techniques that will help you make decisions and solve problems.
- You will find that you spend time talking and trying to reach agreement on what the goals of the programs are, how you will conduct your assessment, and what you will modify, change, delete, or add to your program.
- As you plan what the program should look like, you will be doing a lot of thinking about how you will make your plan work. You should make conscious decisions about how you will be organized for putting the plan into action, who will be responsible for doing what, and how your resources will be used.
- A good planning process will enable you to build involvement and commitment in the school program and to make the program work. It will also lay the groundwork for future planning.

**Writing the Plan**

- When you write the plan, you will probably not describe how you planned.
- When you write the plan, you will use a format that matches the planning process you choose. The written plan will include the decisions you make, but not how you make them.
- Your written plan will include the decisions you make about the assessment information and the major events you agree to be the "heart" or focus of the program. You will not need to describe how you reached agreement.
- The written plan will identify what is going to happen, but it will probably not include all the details about how it is going to happen.
- When you've written a plan, it can be a tool for managing your program, a guide for putting the plan into action, and a record of the agreements you've reached for improving your school. It can help you in other ways too, so keep your own needs in mind when you are writing.

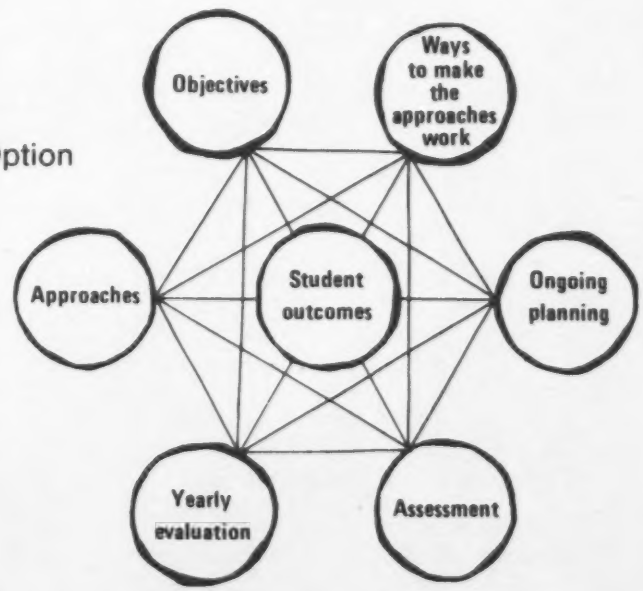
## Option 1

Component Development Option




## Option 2

Integrated Program Option



# II. THE 3 OPTIONS FOR PLANNING

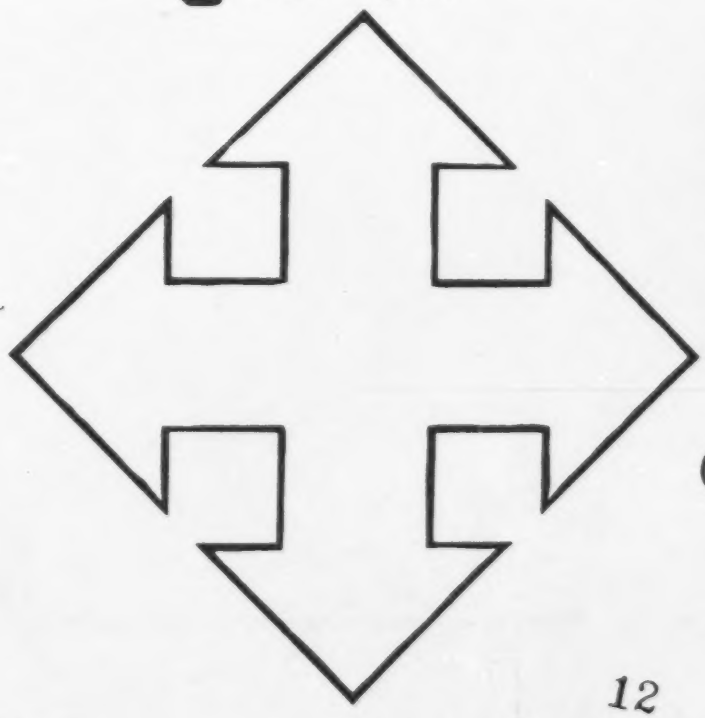
The first section of this handbook described the elements of good planning and the ways in which a planning process can be helpful to you. There are, however, different ways in which these elements can be combined, sequenced, or split apart to create a total planning process. There are many different yet reasonable ways in which a school and community can plan, and no one process is right or best for every school.

Because of this, the State Department of Education is providing three options for planning. Each option includes required elements but guides you to address these elements differently and to fit them together in various ways. You will need to choose the option that will work best at your school.

Options 1, 2, and 3 have been placed in this order because 1 has the most structure and 3 has the least structure. We consider them all good planning processes and hope that you will give them equal consideration in making your choice.

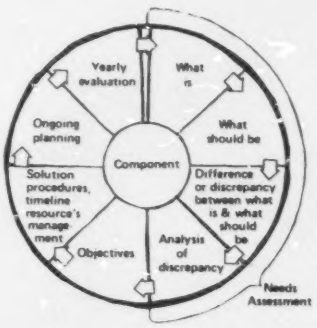
This section of the handbook lists the main ideas of the three options, shows each of their processes, and describes how to use them.

## Option 3 U-Do-It Option



# What Are the Main Ideas and the Planning Process

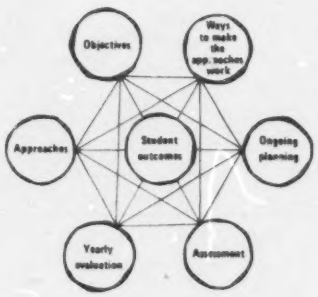
## 1 Component Development Option (revised A-127 process)




In option 1 a school begins with "what is" for each component and works through the planning steps in order.

- It provides a structure that breaks the program into instructional and instructional support components. Each component provides a particular focus for planning.
- It provides a structured, sequential planning process.
- The assessment process is "discrepancy-based" (finding the difference between "what is" and "what should be" and deciding why).
- It offers a structure for agreeing on all major solution procedures.

## 2 Integrated Program Option

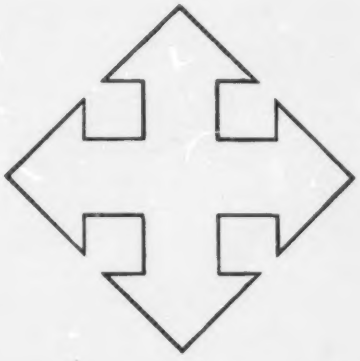



In option 2 a school could begin with any part and move through the parts in any order.

- Its structure allows for the integration of different kinds of instruction and instructional support in a way that focuses on student outcomes.
- The sequence of planning is determined by the school community.
- The assessment for this option is an open process. It may be an assessment of strengths or interests, or it may be a democratic or an analytic assessment. It may also be a discrepancy-based needs assessment.
- It provides a structure for separating areas of total school agreement from those of individual choice.

# of the 3 Options?

## 3 U-Do-It Option



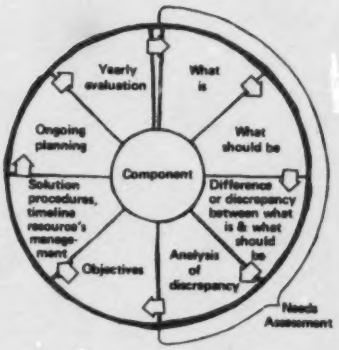
In option 3 a school must decide how to define and address the elements of planning. The school can use any approach to planning or make changes in options 1 or 2, as long as the process allows the school to meet minimum requirements.

- The school community uses or develops its own planning process.
- It gives a choice of format and process. The school community may use another process or modify options 1 or 2.

All options have these features in common:

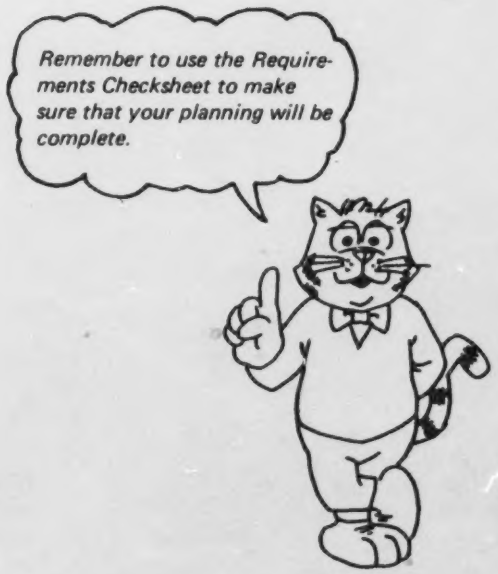
- Student growth as the ultimate goal
- Ongoing planning and yearly evaluation
- Use of the Requirements Checksheet

# 1. USING THE COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT OPTION



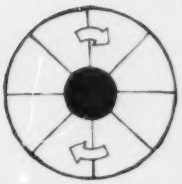

The component development option for planning is based on the A-127 process, the process that was used in planning for the use of special state and federal monies. Therefore, it has been used by many California schools in the past few years. Instructions for using this process and for recording the school plan have been revised slightly.

This option provides a system for planning in which all the planning steps and their order are predetermined. Of the three options, the component development option gives the most direction to planning and requires you to make the fewest decisions about the process.




***What is the Component Development Option?***

- It focuses on different instructional and supportive "pieces" or "segments" of the school program. These are the components.
- It lays out a step-by-step planning process. A school assesses student and school support needs, then develops objectives to meet those needs, and then plans solution procedures that will help in reaching the objectives.
- The first four steps of this process make up a discrepancy-based needs assessment. This means that you start planning each component by finding the difference between what is true for the students and the program and what you want to be true and then figuring out why those differences exist.



# Choosing the Components

Before you can begin using option 1, you must identify the components of your program. Choosing the components is a process that:

- Identifies "pieces" or "segments" of your school program that you will use as focal points for planning. In the past the components for this planning process have been:

*Instructional Components*

Language development
Reading
Mathematics
Multicultural education
Career education (optional secondary component)
Other areas school may choose

*Instructional Support Components*

Staff development
Parent involvement
Parent education
Health and auxiliary services

- Allows you to identify instructional and instructional support components which are similar to the ones above, which are different combinations or divisions of the same components or which are very different from these components.
- Includes choosing both instructional components which focus on the instructional program for students and instructional support components which focus on the way adults work and are trained in order to help students.
- Makes it possible to examine and plan your whole program, since the components you choose will help you divide and organize your planning.

## DO'S

- Do think about various ways of dividing the program into components and the ways in which each type of division would affect your school. Instead of making the instructional components skill areas, you might want to choose subject areas and teach basic skills through each component. Maybe you would want to combine or separate components differently from the way they have been in the past.
- Do think about the components you have now if you have used this planning process in the past. Consider how well this division has worked for your school.

## DON'TS

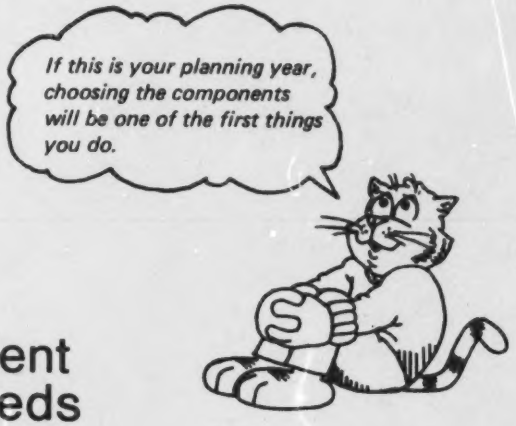
- Don't think that the components you choose will make little difference to your program. Actually, the components will provide a statement about how you look at the school program and give you a framework for planning.
- Don't automatically decide that any components you have had in the past will work best for you now. You may want to make some changes.

## DO'S

- Do choose a workable number of components. If you choose too many, it may be hard to integrate them all to provide a total program for students. If you choose too few, it may be impossible to plan a comprehensive program.
- Do think about how to choose components. You may want to use group discussions, a Delphi process, consensus-reaching activities, or some other decision-making procedures.

## DON'TS

- Don't forget that whatever components you choose, your planning must still address the program requirements applicable to your school.



# Assessing Student and Support Needs

Assessing student needs and support needs is a process that:

- Breaks the identification of student needs and school problems into four steps:
  - "What is"—or collecting information about how well students do and how the school supports students.
  - "What should be"—or figuring out the expectations for students and the school program.
  - "Discrepancy"—or finding the difference between what is and what should be.
  - "Analysis of the discrepancy"—or thinking about why the difference or discrepancy is there.
- Uses the first three steps in the instructional components to focus on how student performance compares to what you want it to be. In the last step you look for the major factors in the school program that explain the discrepancy you see in student performance.
- Uses the four steps in the support components to determine how effectively the specific program area fulfills its role of supporting the instructional program.
- Gives a defined structure for examining the school program and student performance. Assessment is not new; school and community members do it constantly. This needs assessment process merely provides a system for assessment.
- Focuses on why a discrepancy exists so that it guides you in choosing solution procedures that will help you overcome the cause of the discrepancy.

## DO'S

- Do think about what assessment information will help you to plan.
- Do look at more than just test scores. Remember that student attitudes, parent attitudes, teacher judgments, staff skills, materials used, and school facilities are also important.
- Do take a special look at what is happening to subgroups of students. Low-achieving students, limited- and non-English-speaking students, and other subgroups may have different or special needs.
- Do include as many people as possible in assessing needs. This will help build ownership and build commitment to your program.
- Do use information from recent program reviews of your school. Whether these evaluations have been conducted by you or outsiders, the results should be meaningful.
- Do set high, yet possible, expectations for the program.
- Do set aside time for people to meet to talk about and analyze the discrepancy between "what is" and "what should be." Make it an open brainstorming session.
- Do try to identify causes of the discrepancy that you can deal with through the school program.

## DON'TS

- Don't collect information if you don't know what you will do with it and you just want to have a lot of information available.
- Don't rely on just one type of information or one source of information for planning your program.
- Don't ignore unpopular opinions or judgments. They help keep aspects of the program from "slipping through the cracks."
- Don't ignore evaluation information about your school program. Remember that evaluation and planning should be related processes.
- Don't use the least successful area of student performance or program support as the guide for determining "what should be."
- Don't spend all your time collecting information. Remember that it takes just as long to use information well as it does to collect it.
- Don't forget that your analysis of the discrepancy will be the foundation for developing your solution procedure.

*If this is your planning year, be sure to consider the staff development needs related to option 1.*

# Developing Objectives

Developing objectives is a process that:

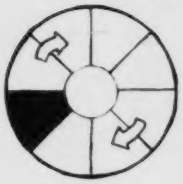
- Establishes specific school expectations. Each objective identifies who will be able to do what and how well, when it will happen, and how it will be evaluated.
- Translates the "what should be" into agreed-upon intentions for accomplishment for each component.
- Provides standards a school can use to evaluate the effectiveness of its program.
- Helps you focus on student achievement and program support in order to identify the expectations you have in these areas.

## DO'S

- Do consider all aspects (who will be able to do what and how well, when it will happen, and how it will be evaluated) in developing objectives.
- Do think about what you want to happen for students.
- Do develop objectives from the needs assessment results, but also develop them by using your feelings about what needs have the highest priority.
- Do think about how to use people in developing objectives. You may want to involve many people to give direction to and review objectives but smaller groups of people to develop them.
- Do consider many ways to evaluate how well you are achieving the objectives.
- Do develop objectives for the special needs of certain students, e.g., LES/NES, EDY/Title I, and special education students.
- Do set objectives high enough to lead to program improvement.

## DON'TS

- Don't get bogged down in technicalities. Concentrate on developing objectives that help you agree on direction and standards to use in evaluating how well you are meeting your expectations.
- Don't feel you have to develop objectives just to match all the assessment information you have.
- Don't try to develop objectives that are unrelated to key program improvement areas.
- Don't overlook your skills and talents as individuals. Some adults and students may be particularly good at and interested in developing objectives.
- Don't think that every objective has to be evaluated by a test or by "hard" data.
- Don't assume that all other objectives will result in specific attention for students with special needs.
- Don't set objectives according to the performance of the lowest-achieving student.



# Developing Solution Procedures

Developing solution procedures is a process of:

- Deciding what the school program should look like so that you can agree upon major activities, events, and timelines.
- Defining how the school can solve the problems that were identified when the discrepancies were discussed.
- Defining how adults and students will work and what strategies they will use to meet the objectives. Solution procedures make the objectives practical.
- Identifying the support and training activities that will be necessary to achieve the objectives and eliminate the discrepancies.

## DO'S

- Do make sure you understand what your current program is before you begin developing solution procedures.
- Do develop solution procedures that will help solve the problems you found when discussing discrepancies.
- Do think about when the solution procedures should happen. This will help you make sure that you are not planning for too much to happen at any one time.
- Do think about various aspects of the program in developing solution procedures: methodologies, materials, personnel, adult skills and talents, time available, and the like.
- Do develop solution procedures that will help to meet the needs of and objectives for special groups of students. In many cases you will find that you have specific procedures for these groups.
- Do think about how each solution procedure will be evaluated.
- Do think about how each solution procedure will help you reach your objectives.

## DON'TS

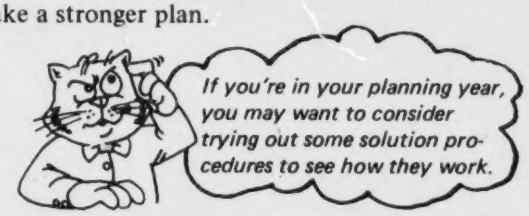
- Don't think that you have to develop all new solution procedures. Parts of your current program may be working well and should not be changed.
- Don't try to plan for every detail or event.
- Don't assume that all solution procedures will be happening all the time.
- Don't forget that putting each solution procedure into action will take some planning for implementation, such as how you will use your resources.
- Don't try to make every solution procedure fit every student or adult.
- Don't develop solution procedures without thinking about how you will judge their effectiveness.
- Don't develop solution procedures for which there seems to be no need.

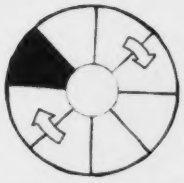
## DO'S

- In discussing solution procedures, do consider what responsibilities adults have to take and what students must do. There should be procedures for both students and adults, and it should be clear which is which.
- Do involve as many people as possible in developing solution procedures. Consider brainstorming, group discussions, or other specific techniques to help you develop solution procedures.

## DON'TS

- Don't mix up student and adult responsibilities in planning a single solution procedure.
- Don't leave people out of planning even though it may be faster. It takes longer to put a lot of ideas together, but it will make a stronger plan.



# Doing Ongoing Planning

Doing ongoing planning is a process that:

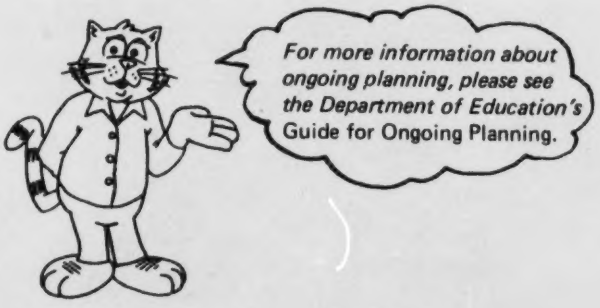
- Helps the school look at key issues or questions about putting the program into action and for judging how well it is working.
- Helps the program change when the needs and conditions at the school change.
- Encourages self-evaluation and provides a way to do it.

## DO'S

- Do choose issues or questions for ongoing planning that are of prime importance to the school program.
- Do determine issues of high priority by considering unexpected successes or failures about which you would like to know more, yearly evaluation results, unexpected outcomes of an activity, program review results, budgetary items, and conflicts about an activity among various groups.
- Do plan how you will involve those responsible for carrying out the program, including other school-community members, in the steps of ongoing planning.

## DON'TS

- Don't try to evaluate and plan for all parts of the program all the time. It's impossible!
- Don't think that ongoing planning questions have to be developed from only one source. Encourage various groups to ask questions about implementation, and choose from among the best ones.



## DO'S

- Do think about different kinds and sources of information that will help you examine the key issues and concerns.
- Do plan how to put the information together in different ways so that you can analyze it thoroughly.
- In analyzing information about an issue, do plan to make interpretations in the context of your own school and community. The same information may have different meanings for different schools.
- Do plan to use the process for making decisions and for modifying the program. It is also possible that you may decide to keep part of the program the same or even to expand it.

## DON'TS

- Don't judge these critical parts of your program on just one type of information. You may be misled.
- Don't think you will be able to rely on just one analysis of the information. If the issue is a critical one, it will probably also be complex. Different ways of analyzing will bring out different aspects of the issue and give you a better chance of making good decisions.
- Don't ignore the unique characteristics of your school and community when you make plans for interpreting the different analyses of the information.
- Don't plan to make decisions without using the results of ongoing planning. If you have spent time monitoring and evaluating the program but forget to use the data or if you are not willing to make changes, the ongoing planning will be worthless.

# Designing the Yearly Evaluation

Designing the yearly evaluation is a process that:

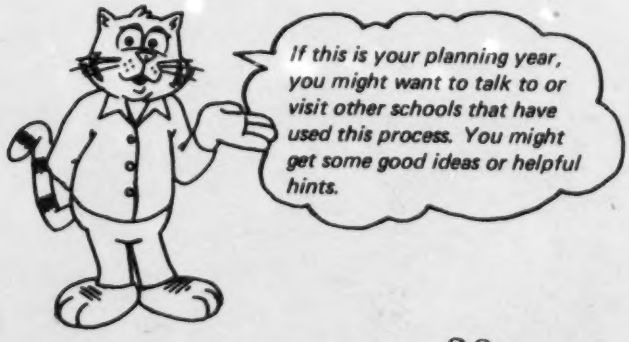
- Will provide for reviewing the whole school program and judging how successfully the program worked toward improving student achievement, the instructional program, and the school environment.
- Will give you information about how well the program worked so that you can make changes for the next year.
- Identifies how the judgments of teachers, parents, other school personnel, and students will be used to determine how fully the objectives have been achieved and how effective the solution procedures have been.
- Will help you examine the way you spent money and what contributed to the success of your program.

## DO'S

- Do make sure that both the yearly evaluation design and ongoing planning are included in your planning process. Ongoing planning helps you look at specific questions about how parts of the program are working. Yearly evaluation will help you examine the extent to which the program and its parts worked.
- Do consider different ways to evaluate your program and identify which ones would work best. Be creative! You may want to consider sampling students' work, using student or adult self-evaluations, giving students opportunities to apply skills in "real-life" situations, discussions, and so forth.
- Do plan to look at the whole program at some point. Ask questions that will help you determine how well the program worked.
- Do be prepared to consider the effectiveness of the whole program or part of it by considering what it will have cost.
- Do plan to involve students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents in the process of judging the improved school program.
- Do plan to use the results of the yearly evaluation in revising the program for the next year.

## DON'TS

- Don't confuse the yearly evaluation design with ongoing planning. Make sure you get the benefits of both.
- Don't think that the only way to evaluate your program or parts of it is by testing.
- Don't concentrate only on objectives and solution procedures and forget to plan procedures for judging how they all fit together, how the assessment worked, whether the components you chose worked, whether the evaluation was done well, whether the program was economically efficient, and so forth. (See examples on next page.)
- Don't assume that the most or least expensive decision will necessarily be the most effective.
- Don't assume that evaluation information about the improved school will speak for itself. Any data will have to be placed in the context of some group's values.
- Don't think that designing a yearly evaluation is only to get information for someone else. It should help you make planning decisions.


If this is your planning year, you might want to talk to or visit other schools that have used this process. You might get some good ideas or helpful hints.

9

# Strengths and Weaknesses of Option 1

★ Because the program is divided into and planned in terms of separate pieces, option 1 allows for considerable detail and thoroughness in the development of each piece.

- This strength can also be a weakness if the separation of pieces is overemphasized and the program becomes merely a series of miniprograms that are not related effectively.
- In planning a component, you may encounter another hazard. The development of that part of the program may become limited to the techniques involved in that particular subject area, and you may forget to take into account the application of those techniques in the real world.

★ The needs assessment is a very clear, step-by-step process designed to discover discrepancies in current and expected student performance and in level of program support.

- This strength can also be a weakness if the school focuses entirely on discrepancies and fails to note those areas of the program that are outstanding, unique, and interesting.
- Because of the emphasis on student performance, the needs assessment process can elicit information that is very narrow, and consequently planning may become narrow. This would be true, for example, if in the first needs assessment step a school only considered student achievement test data.

★ The planning process is defined, structured, and sequential and, thus, provides a framework and a lot of direction.

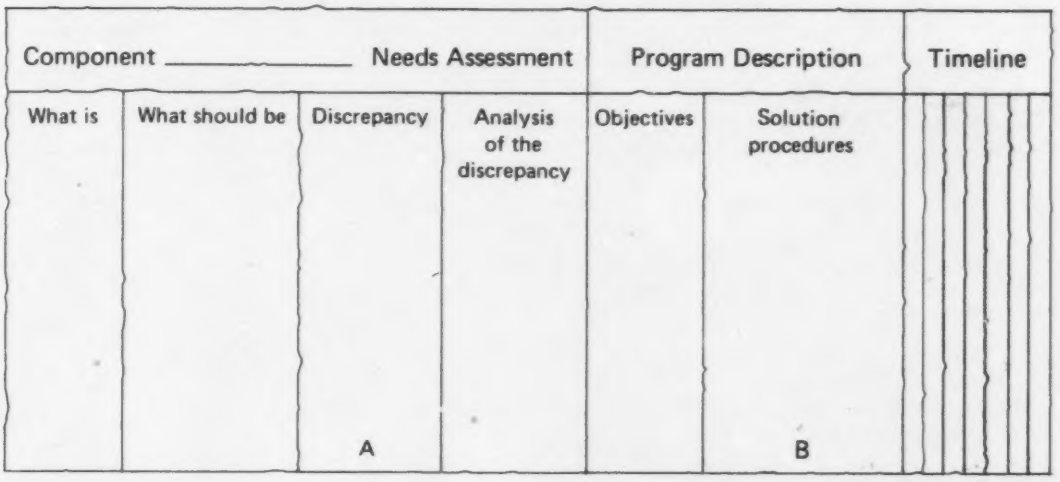
- The sequential and defined nature of the process can also be a weakness if carried to the extreme. Even though the sequence remains the same, the process should be adapted to the particular needs of a school.
- Since the first steps of determining "what is" and "what should be" are rather abstract ones, it may be a difficult place for some people to start planning.

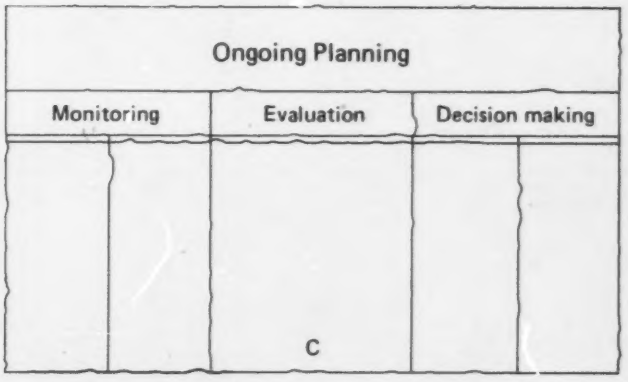
★ The development of solution procedures provides a structure for obtaining schoolwide agreement on improvement strategies. This encourages commitment and cooperation in a common venture.

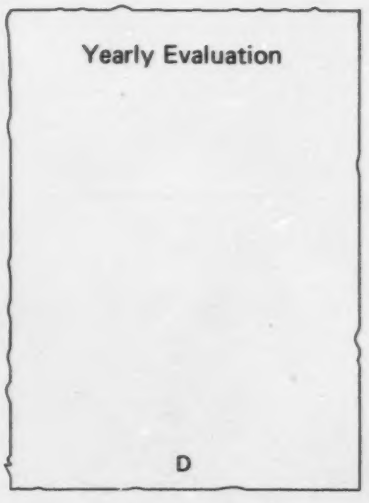
- This agreement process can also be a weakness if the solution procedures do not allow for the individuality of each teacher's style and situation.
- Another potential problem is that in order to get everyone to agree, people may decide upon solution procedures that are diluted and have little meaning.
- The process of developing solution procedures becomes a weakness if people aren't aware that they need to decide how to use the solution procedures in their own situations.

# What the Format for the Written Plan Looks Like

After thinking and reading about the planning process for option 1, you are probably curious about the written plan and what it will look like. The instructions and format for the option 1 written plan are under a separate cover, but an illustration of the format that would be used for each component follows.

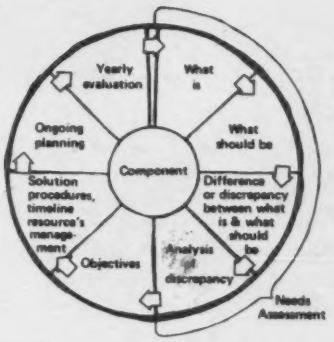



The formats for ongoing planning and yearly evaluation, shown here, are for the overall program plan, not for each component.

# Checklist for Choosing Option 1

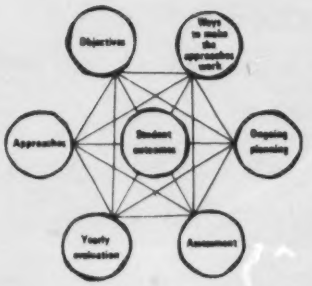



At the end of the section for using each option, a self-check is included to help you decide which planning option to choose. Be sure to read through the section on each option before making a decision.

| | *Yes* | *No* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you think it would be best to plan your educational program by focusing on its "pieces" or "components"? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Do you think a process that's already laid out step-by-step would provide the best structure for planning at your school? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Have you used this planning process before and found that it worked well? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Does a discrepancy-based needs assessment process make sense to you, and does it seem as if a needs assessment would be the best way to start your planning? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Do you think that analyzing discrepancies is a good basis for developing effective solution procedures? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Do you think that the strengths of option 1 outweigh its weaknesses? | ☐ | ☐ |

After you have completed the self-checks on each of the three options, look at the results to help choose the best option for you.

# 2. USING THE INTEGRATED PROGRAM OPTION



The integrated program option offers a new process for planning this year. In the past, one planning model was used statewide. However, since an effective planning process matches a school's needs, this year there are two additional models from which to choose. Option 2 is unique in that each part of the planning process (see diagram above) is linked directly to student outcomes. All parts of the process can be done in any sequence that works for a school, and each part may be developed around students, program, support, and implementation. Ultimately, though, each part will be directly connected to student outcomes.

Because this is a new option this year, you'll find examples of parts of option 2 sprinkled throughout this section.

***What is the Integrated Program Option?***

- It looks at the whole student as the center of the school program and brings together all supportive school resources to develop a program around desired student outcomes.
- It includes the development of approaches, ways to make the approaches work, student outcomes, assessment, objectives, ongoing planning, and yearly evaluation.
- It has flexibility in the sequence of these parts of the planning process and encourages the school to adapt the process to its unique needs.
- It provides a way for each part of the planning process to relate to several other parts simultaneously. For instance, one schoolwide approach may affect more than one student outcome, or one objective may relate to more than one assessment finding.
- It provides a way of specifying the distinction between approaches that have schoolwide agreement and the individual way each staff member makes the approaches work.

# Determining Student Outcomes

Determining student outcomes is a process that:

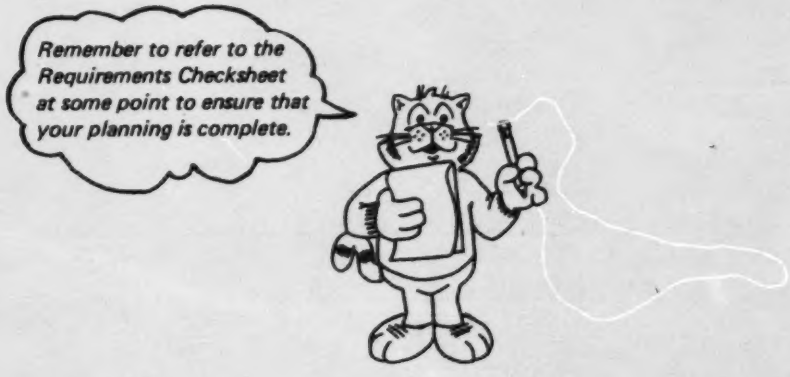
- Identifies what a school-community believes is most important for its students to know, appreciate, understand, or be able to do. This process may be used after more specific decisions are made about program directions, e.g., objectives, assessment, or approaches.
- Enables people to make conscious decisions about the kind of adults they want the school's students to become.
- Brings people together in a way that instills ownership and commitment to the school's program.

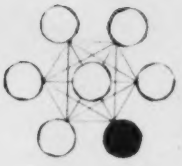
## DO'S

- Do determine student outcomes through a process that meets your needs. You might use small or large groups, surveys, Delphi or synergistic techniques.
- Do develop student outcomes that pull together the various skills a student should have at the end of his or her education at your school.
- Do select student outcomes that have schoolwide agreement. Use the process to build ownership and commitment to improving the program. Use the resolution of conflict and disagreement to increase understanding and refine student outcomes.
- Do decide upon student outcomes sometime during the process of planning. You may start by identifying outcomes; or they may become evident from your decisions in other parts of the planning, e.g., approaches, ways to make approaches work.
- Do use the yearly evaluation design to help you determine the success you achieve in reaching student outcomes.

## DON'TS

- Don't feel that you have to duplicate previous work in choosing student outcomes. You may have done this already, or you may want to reconsider some you are currently using.
- Don't think that selecting student outcomes has to be the first planning event. In your school, it might work better to assess the school program or identify some important new approaches first.
- Don't confuse student outcomes with instructional support activities. School climate, staff development, or community involvement should be developed as support for student outcomes.
- Don't overlook unpopular opinions and interests in selecting student outcomes.
- Don't make the mistake of doing all parts of your planning without considering their relationship to student outcomes.
- Don't rely on just the results of the evaluation of your objectives to find out how you did in reaching student outcomes.





# Assessing Students' and Program Capabilities

Assessing students' and program capabilities is a process that:

- Includes collecting, analyzing, and evaluating information about how well the school program is meeting the educational needs of each student.
- Uses data about students' skills, program effectiveness, use of resources, school facilities, instructional climates, staff, students with special needs, and the community.
- Helps the planners learn more about what parts of the program work well and what areas need improvement, although the assessment may be done after some initial decisions are made about approaches or objectives.
- Helps school planners be more deliberate about the focus, constraints, resources, and, thus, the program priorities.

## DO'S

- Do use the information you already have.
- Do consider the kind of information you want to collect, and collect only what you plan to use. You might look at students' activities; skills and knowledge, both present and expected; present program effectiveness and what the program should look like; present use of resources and resources that are needed.
- Do break surveys, if you use them, into sections, and give them to different groups—thus, making sure all questions get answered.
- Do use random sampling, being sure to include some information from all relevant groups: grade levels departments, students, parents, and so forth.
- Do ask questions appropriate to the group being sampled.
- Do analyze the information you collect and decide what it means for your school. Doing this is even more important than collecting the information.
- Do use assessment information in the rest of your planning. For example, it might be helpful in determining student outcomes. On the other hand assessment might be based on student outcomes that were previously determined.

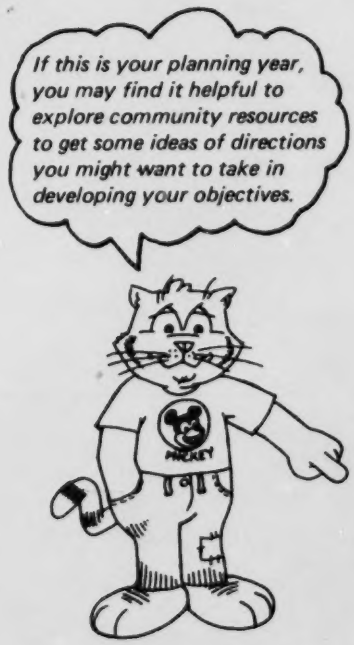
## DON'TS

- Don't think you have to start your assessment from scratch.
- Don't think that you should assess only student needs and program needs. You may want to assess strengths, talents, interests, and available resources.
- Don't think that all information has to come from surveys; some can come from discussions, interviews, or other means. Don't give long surveys.
- Don't be overwhelmed by thinking you have to collect information from everyone.
- Don't collect information that doesn't relate to your questions about program effectiveness.

# Developing Objectives

Developing objectives is a process that:

- Establishes specific school expectations. Each objective identifies either who will be able to do what and how well or what will happen, when it will happen, and how it will be evaluated.
- Allows you to identify expectations for students and for what you want the program to look like.
- Provides standards a school can use to evaluate the effectiveness of its program.
- Identifies specific changes in your instructional program that will help you reach student outcomes.


If this is your planning year, you may find it helpful to explore community resources to get some ideas of directions you might want to take in developing your objectives.
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## DO'S

- Do develop objectives in areas of high priority. You might want to begin improvements in areas where there's a high interest in improvement, where some change has already occurred, or where there's a group with a new idea it wants to try.
- Do develop objectives for the special needs of certain students; e.g., LES/NES, EDY/Title I, and special education students.
- Do develop objectives when you feel ready to do so. You may be more ready to do this after you have determined some approaches.
- Do develop objectives that can be evaluated, but interpret the method of evaluation creatively. The degree of success can be found in many ways.
- Do think about the relationship between the evaluation of your objectives and the yearly evaluation of your program.

## DON'TS

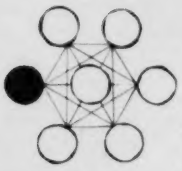
- Don't think that high priority areas always have to be those where achievement is lowest.
- Don't assume that all other objectives will result in specific attention being given to students with special needs.
- Don't feel you have to use the sequence of planning presented in this handbook. Decide what sequence works for you.
- Don't rely only on standardized achievement measures to define your degree of success. Interview students, parents, and staff. Look at students' ability and tendency to use what they've learned in everyday problem solving. Use records of student growth.
- Don't forget that your yearly evaluation design should use the results of the evaluation of your objectives along with other data you've collected. Together, these data should answer questions you've identified about overall program effectiveness.

*If you find yourself wanting to look at the format for the plan right now, remember that this handbook is about the PROCESS and doesn't specify how things get written down.*

*BUT...*

*If you can't resist finding out about how things get written down, look at the school plan form.*

*You might want to use the planning year to try out some approaches you're thinking about using.*



# Developing Approaches

Developing approaches is a process that:

- Identifies what strategies adults agree to use to achieve each objective.
- Distinguishes the adult responsibilities for making the program work from what students will be doing. Student activities are developed as part of "making the approaches work."
- Separates strategies which are agreed to on a schoolwide basis from the individual way each person puts that strategy or activity into action. These individual techniques are part of "making the approaches work."
- Identifies the best general way for adults to use their skills.

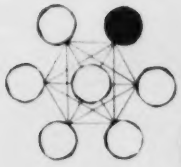
## DO'S

- Do agree on approaches to which all people are committed.
- Do design approaches that set a general direction for reaching objectives, but determine them whenever it's most appropriate for you.
- Do think about the areas that are better left to individual choice (e.g., individual personality and teaching styles, previous successes and failures, expertise), and consider those areas in the "making the approaches work" part of the process.
- Do consider approaches for students with special needs, e.g., LES/NES, EDY/ Title I, special education students.
- Do begin your planning process by developing approaches if you find that starting at any other place is too abstract.

## DON'TS

- Don't miss the chance to use this part of planning to build a school spirit for improving the program.
- Don't make approaches so specific that there's no room left for individual staff members to choose ways to make each approach work.
- Don't forget in developing approaches to consider the kinds of materials, teaching methodologies, alternatives for different learning styles, and grouping strategies.
- Don't rely on schoolwide approaches as the only means of reaching students with special needs.
- Don't be hesitant about moving back and forth between developing approaches and some other step of planning. You may find that approaches are an easier place to start because they define what you do day-to-day.

*In a very small or very large school, these processes will be on a smaller or larger scale. Tailor them to fit your needs.*



# Making the Approaches Work

Making the approaches work is a process:

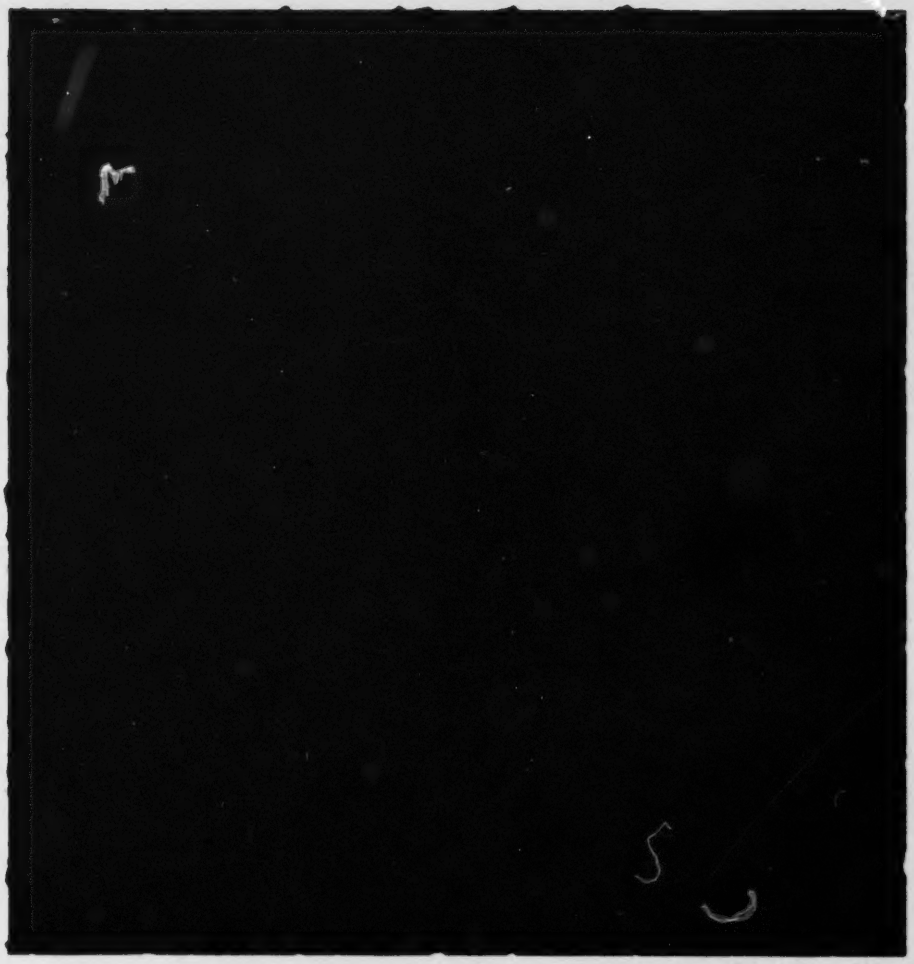
- In which each teacher or group of teachers, at the beginning of the year, decides how to put each of the applicable approaches into action—what teaching styles to use, what the student interests and abilities are, what materials or facilities are necessary, what other teaching skills might be needed, and so forth.
- In which other staff members (principals, guidance counselors, resource teachers, paraprofessionals) decide how to fulfill their individual responsibilities to the schoolwide approaches.
- In which all staff members, as individuals or in groups, decide what students will be doing for each approach.
- That can help a staff member focus on his or her individual part in broad improvement approaches and also help her or him respond to changing emphases throughout the year.
- That can help each staff member look at the relationship among her or his effort, students' activities, and student outcomes.

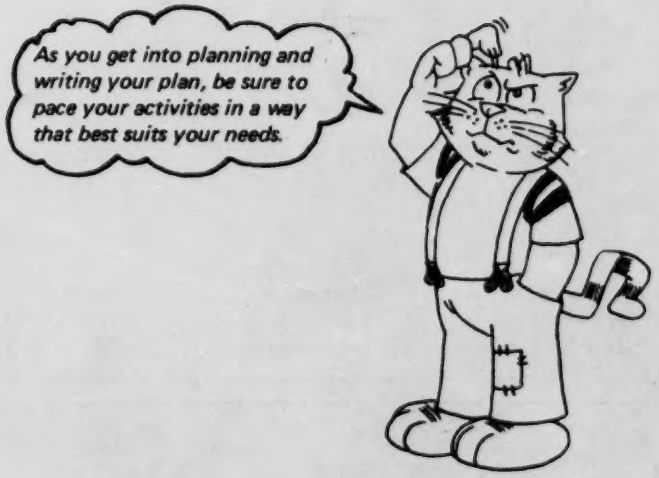
## DO'S

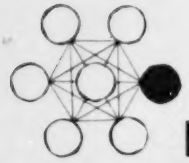
- Do use this process to help plan how the schoolwide approaches will relate to your classroom or school assignments, your individual strengths and weaknesses, student skills and interests, available materials and facilities, and so forth.
- Do feel free to revise, modify, or expand your ways to make each approach work. You are likely to have many new ideas as you begin to implement your plan.
- Do use this process, if you are not a classroom teacher, to translate schoolwide approaches into your everyday world. Principals, guidance counselors, resource teachers, and librarians will then be able to support classroom teachers.

## DON'TS

- Don't feel that each individual has to develop different ways to make an approach work. This process should allow for some individual differences, not force differences. Sometimes it may work best for small groups of teachers, adults, or other school personnel to work together to develop ways to make an approach work.
- Don't develop ways to make the approaches work with the idea that they will form a contractual agreement, especially if they are clearly not working and need refinement.




As you get into planning and writing your plan, be sure to pace your activities in a way that best suits your needs.



# Doing Ongoing Planning

Doing ongoing planning is a process that:

- Helps the school look at key issues or questions about putting the program into action and helps the school judge how well the program is working.
- Helps the program change when the needs and conditions at the school change.
- Encourages self-evaluation and provides a way to do it.

## DO'S

- Do choose issues or questions for ongoing planning that are of prime importance to the school program.
- Do determine issues of high priority by considering unexpected successes or failures about which you would like to know more, yearly evaluation results, unexpected outcomes of an activity, program review results, budgetary items, and conflicts about an activity among various groups.
- Do plan how you will involve those responsible for carrying out the program and other school-community members in the steps of ongoing planning.
- Do think about different kinds and sources of information that will help you examine the key issues and concerns.
- Do plan to put the information together in different ways so that you can analyze it thoroughly.
- In analyzing information about an issue, do plan to make interpretations in the context of your own school and community. The same information may have different meanings to different schools.

## DON'TS

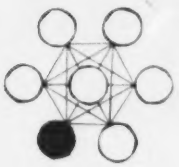
- Don't try to evaluate and plan for all parts of the program all the time. It's impossible!
- Don't think that ongoing planning questions have to be developed from only one source. Encourage various groups to ask questions about implementation, and choose from among the best ones.
- Don't judge these critical parts of your program on just one type of information. You may be misled.
- Don't think that you will be able to rely on just one analysis of the information. If the issue is a critical one, it will probably also be complex. Different ways of analyzing will bring out different aspects of the issue and give you a better chance of making good decisions.
- Don't ignore the unique characteristics of your school and community when you plan for interpreting the different analyses of the information.

### DO'S

- Do plan to use the process for making decisions and for modifying the program. It is also possible that a decision may be to keep part of the program the same or even to expand it.

### DON'TS

- Don't plan to make decisions without using the results of ongoing planning. If you have spent time monitoring and evaluating the program but forget to use the data or if you are not willing to make changes, the ongoing planning will be worthless.



## Designing the Yearly Evaluation

Designing the yearly evaluation is a process that:

- Will provide for reviewing the whole school program and for judging how well it worked toward improving student achievement, instructional programs, and school environment.
- Will give you information about how well the program worked so that you can make changes for the next year.
- Identifies how the judgments of teachers and other school personnel, parents, and students will be used to determine how fully the objectives have been achieved and how effective the approaches have been.
- Will help you examine the way you spent money and what contributed to the success of your program.

### DO'S

- Do make sure that both the yearly evaluation design and ongoing planning are included in your planning process. Ongoing planning helps you look at specific questions about how parts of the program are working. Yearly evaluation will help you examine the extent to which the program and its parts worked.
- Do plan to look at the whole program at some point. Ask questions that will help you determine how well the program worked.

### DON'TS

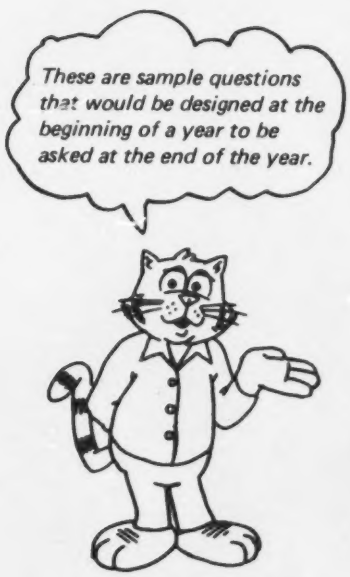
- Don't confuse the yearly evaluation design with ongoing planning. Make sure you get the benefits of both.
- Don't concentrate only on objectives and approaches and forget to plan procedures for judging how they all fit together, how the assessment worked, whether the student outcomes were appropriate, and whether the evaluation was done well, whether the program was economically efficient, and so forth. (See examples on the next page.)

## DO'S

- Do be prepared to consider the effectiveness of the whole program or part of it by considering what it will have cost.
- Do consider different ways to evaluate your program and which ones work best. Be creative! What about sampling students' work, using student or adult self-evaluations, giving students opportunities to apply skills in "real-life" situations, and holding discussions?
- Do plan to involve students, teachers, and other school personnel and parents in the process of judging the improved school program.
- Do plan to use the results of the yearly evaluation in revising the program for the next year.

## DON'TS

- Don't assume that the most or least expensive decision will necessarily be the most effective.
- Don't think that the only way to evaluate your program or parts of it is by testing.
- Don't assume that evaluation information about the improved school program will speak for itself. Any data will have to be placed in the context of some group's values.
- Don't think that designing a yearly evaluation is only to get information for someone else. It should help you make planning decisions.



# Strengths and Weaknesses of Option 2

★ One strength of option 2 is that the program is integrated so that instructional and instructional support activities form the basis for the attainment of student outcomes.

- This strength can be overdone if it makes you think that support activities cannot be a thrust of your program. For instance, you may want staff development to be an emphasis of the first year of your program, and you can do that in option 2. Just make sure that you figure out how that staff development will, in the long run, increase student learning.

★ A strength of option 2 is that the sequence of planning can be adapted to the needs of your school community.

- This may also be a weakness if you stumble in creating your own sequence of planning or if you do everything without thinking of student outcomes and then try to decide what student outcomes fit your situation.
- You may have trouble if you move back and forth too much between the parts of option 2, or you may not know for sure when to move from one part to another.

★ A strength is that you can assess your program in different ways.

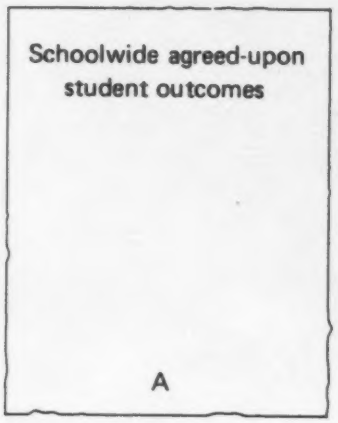
- This becomes a weakness if you don't think the assessment process through thoroughly.
- Any specific assessment process you choose will have its own weaknesses. The most reliable assessment is one that uses different kinds of questions and data to examine the program.

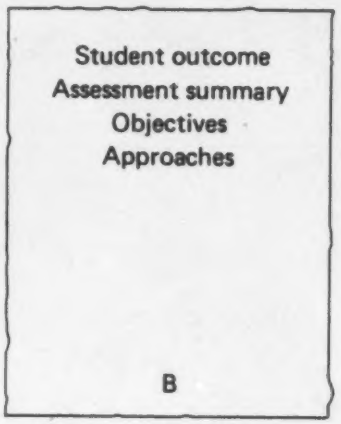
★ A strength of this option is that it has a structure for separating approaches, which are agreed to, and ways to make each approach work, which allows some individual flexibility.

- This differentiation may seem as if it creates an extra step that's unnecessary.

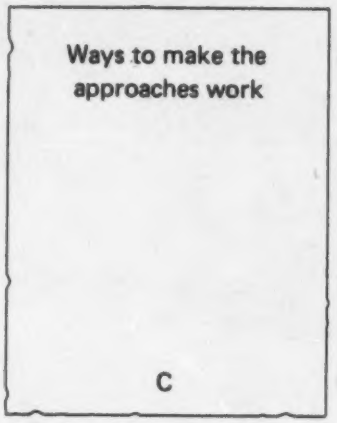
# What the Format for the Written Plan Looks Like

After thinking and reading about developing an integrated program, you may be wondering about the written plan and how it supports the process. The format below is the one that will be used with option 2.*

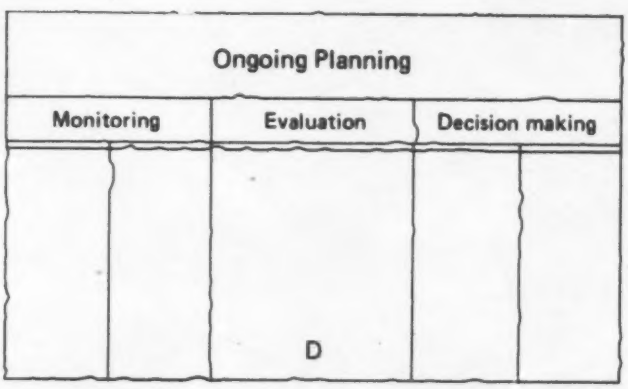



This format is to be used for each student outcome.



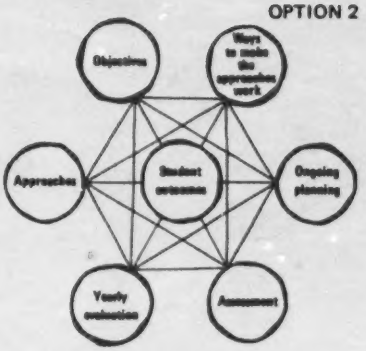

This will be completed by individual staff members who would retain them for their own use.




Ongoing planning and evaluation are formats for the overall program plan.

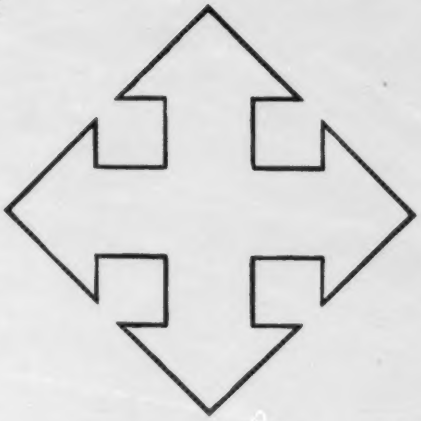
*Choose option 3 if you want to use the integrated program process but want to record it differently.

# Checklist for Choosing Option 2



| | *Yes* | *No* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you want to use a process that enables you to plan your educational program around the whole student in a way that integrates various curriculum areas and supportive services? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Can the needs of your school best be met by using a planning process that has flexibility within its structure? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Will you be able to implement the program better if your planning process formally distinguishes what adults do from what students do? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Is there an assessment process you prefer over a discrepancy-based needs assessment? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Do you think that achieving consensus about student outcomes would be helpful to your planning? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Do you think that the strengths of this option outweigh its weaknesses? | ☐ | ☐ |

Complete the self-check for option 3 before you begin to choose the option that will work best for you.



# 3. USING THE U-DO-IT OPTION

***What is the U-Do-It Option?***

- It leaves the structure for planning up to you.
- It allows you to choose ideas from the other planning processes or formats or change one of them in some way.
- It encourages new ideas and maximum use of planning processes that are already working at your school.
- It allows you to record the decisions from the planning process in any way that works best.
- It uses the elements of planning outlined in Education Code sections 52014 and 52015.

## DO'S

- Do consider using this option if you've had a lot of planning experience, especially if you are using a process that works well for you.
- Do consider using this option if you feel that the other two will restrict your thinking, planning, and program improvement.
- Do read through the sections on the other planning options. They may give you ideas about using the u-do-it option.
- Do remember to use the Requirements Checksheet to make sure that your planning addresses all requirements.
- Do make sure that your planning process includes the required activities: objectives, assessment, steps toward reaching the objectives, ongoing planning, and yearly evaluation.

## DON'TS

- Don't assume that this option will be easier to use because it has no predetermined structure. Remember that you will need to design your own structure.
- Don't think that the u-do-it option has to be a brand new approach to planning. It may use a combination of ideas, processes, or parts of the other two options.
- Don't let the Requirements Checksheet become your format or structure for planning. Use it only to make sure you're covering the required areas.
- Don't think that these requirements dictate your total process, how you do it, or what you call it. These are part of every planning process, no matter what they're called.

# Strengths and Weaknesses of Option 3

★ A strength is that the school community develops its own planning process.

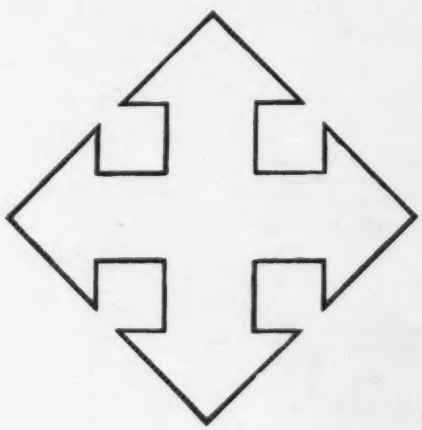
- This can become a weakness if it continues a planning process that hasn't been effective in the past.
- A potential weakness is that without a predetermined structure, more time, expertise, and interest may be required to develop fully a planning process that will work for you.

★ Another strength is that the school community may modify the format and process or both of options 1 or 2 and make that option 3.

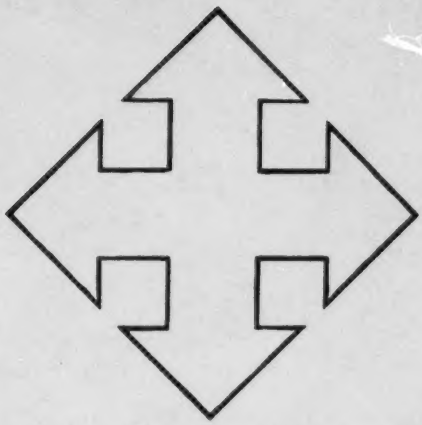
- This may become difficult if you start out trying to alter options 1 or 2 and discover that you don't have the time, skills, or resources to complete the process.
- You may also have difficulty if you try to combine the planning processes of options 1 and 2, since they have different characteristics. It is possible, but do it carefully if that is your choice.

# What the Format for the Written Plan Looks Like

You'll have to construct your own format for the option 3 written plan. As you have learned, it can go in one of many directions and still meet the requirements. Be creative and design a format that helps you get where you're going.



# Checklist for Choosing Option 3



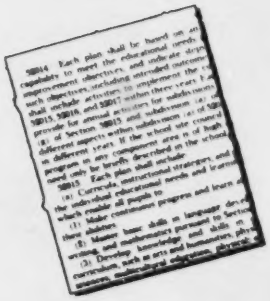
| | *Yes* | *No* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you believe that developing your own planning process would lead to a better school program? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Are you already using a planning process that works well for you but which is different from options 1 and 2? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Have you been using a planning process that doesn't work very well for you? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Do many people at your school have strong ideas about how to plan and how to write that plan on paper? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Are you interested in using a planning process that's a modification of options 1 or 2 or some combination of them? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Do you think that the strengths of this option outweigh its weaknesses? | ☐ | ☐ |

After completing each of the self-checks, you're ready to begin considering the options more seriously. Compare your results on each self-check. Next, you might want to look at the planning formats and instructions for each option. Then you may want to reconsider the strengths and weaknesses of each one and match them to the strengths and weaknesses of your school-community.

*Ahora es tiempo de detenerse por un momento. Hasta ahora usted ha estado pensando en escoger un proceso de planear. Bueno, de aquí en adelante usted debe de empezar a pensar en lo que se trata el buen planear para el mejoramiento de su escuela.*

# III. WHAT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING SHOULD BE ABOUT

Now that you've read through the sections on good planning and using the three options for planning, you may be doing some thinking about the contents of improving your program. If you're involved in the school improvement program, this section is for you. It describes what your planning should be about. (Sections I and II of this handbook are designed to be helpful in any type of school planning; this section, however, is specifically relevant to those receiving school improvement program funds.)



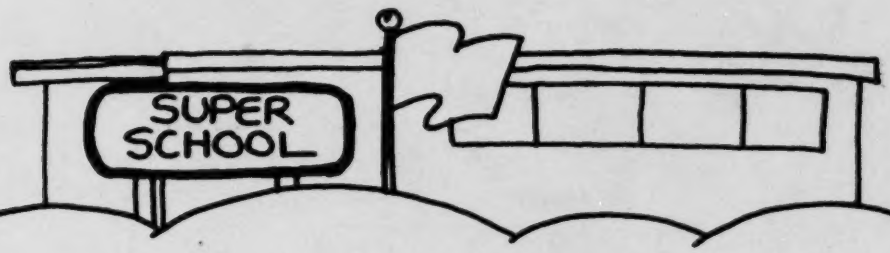
In defining the extent of school improvement, Education Code sections 52014–52017 describe the planning that is necessary for schools to be more responsive to students' needs. Those code sections also describe several concepts essential to improving the quality of a school program. This section of the handbook organizes those concepts into a framework that will help you put them into a perspective for your own program improvement planning.

In focusing on school improvements, think about three things:

- How students are acquiring skills and knowledge
- How the school is being responsive in the strategies used
- How these two work together to form a perspective for focusing on the school program.

As you begin to consider these aspects of school improvement, you will probably wonder how they fit together as a whole. On the next page, you will find a description of the ideal that's described in the Education Code.

# What Kind of Place Can Your School Be?




Schools involved in improvement are places where students learn skills and acquire knowledge in increasingly advanced areas of reading, writing, language, and computation. Schools that provide these advantages for students give them opportunities to apply learning in many different areas, such as science, history, art, or physical education. Teachers use strategies to support their students' individual strengths, differences, and needs through a variety of learning groups, methods, and materials.

As schools increasingly mirror the ideal concepts of school improvement, students are thinking critically and making independent judgments. Through their interaction with peers and adults, they are developing awareness and appreciation essential to living in a pluralistic society. All of the activities in schools like these are designed to build students' self-esteem, regard for others, and personal and social responsibility so that they are able to use their skills and knowledge more successfully in day-to-day living. Their experiences in these kinds of schools give students the ability to make wise career choices and consumer decisions. Sound mental and emotional health are encouraged in schools that focus on students' needs. Students in secondary schools have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in any part of the curriculum and to waive the course-hour requirements.

In order to support this learning environment for students, there is a staff development program for teachers, other school personnel, paraprofessionals, and volunteers; and it is based on the needs of both students and adults at the school. In elementary schools, the school program is also supported by the active involvement and education of parents and by the evaluation of the health needs of students.

Many schools embody many of these qualities already. The emphasis of school improvement, however, is on improving those qualities and making them all work together to provide a responsive education for students.

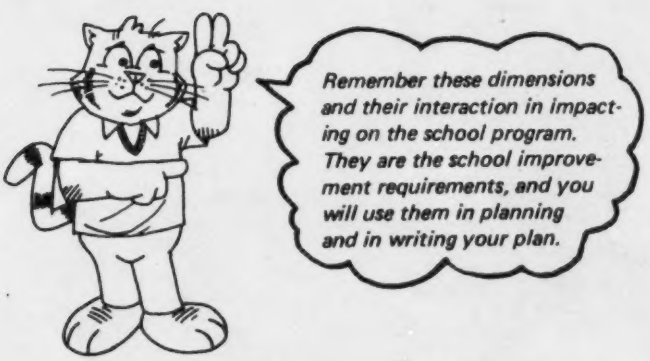
# The Dimensions of School Improvement

It's not too difficult to imagine what an ideal educational program does in responding to individual students, but figuring out how to plan such a program is difficult. You will almost certainly have to think of the whole and how it can be divided into separate, but related, dimensions.

- Consider *one of these dimensions* to be the skills and knowledge that students acquire. These are not only academic skills but also the knowledge that is important in different curricular areas. They include the social understanding, appreciation, and abilities and the personal skills and knowledge you want students to have.
- Consider as *another dimension* the methods, techniques, and strategies used to respond to the needs and strengths of individual students. These are the ways in which the school helps students develop all the skills and knowledge in the first dimension. While the skills and knowledge for students are quite different from the methods by which students can develop them, the two must interact for school improvement to happen.

Now think about how these two dimensions relate to the organization of the school instructional program. The organization, slightly different for each school, serves as a framework for planning the use of instructional strategies to help students develop skills and knowledge.

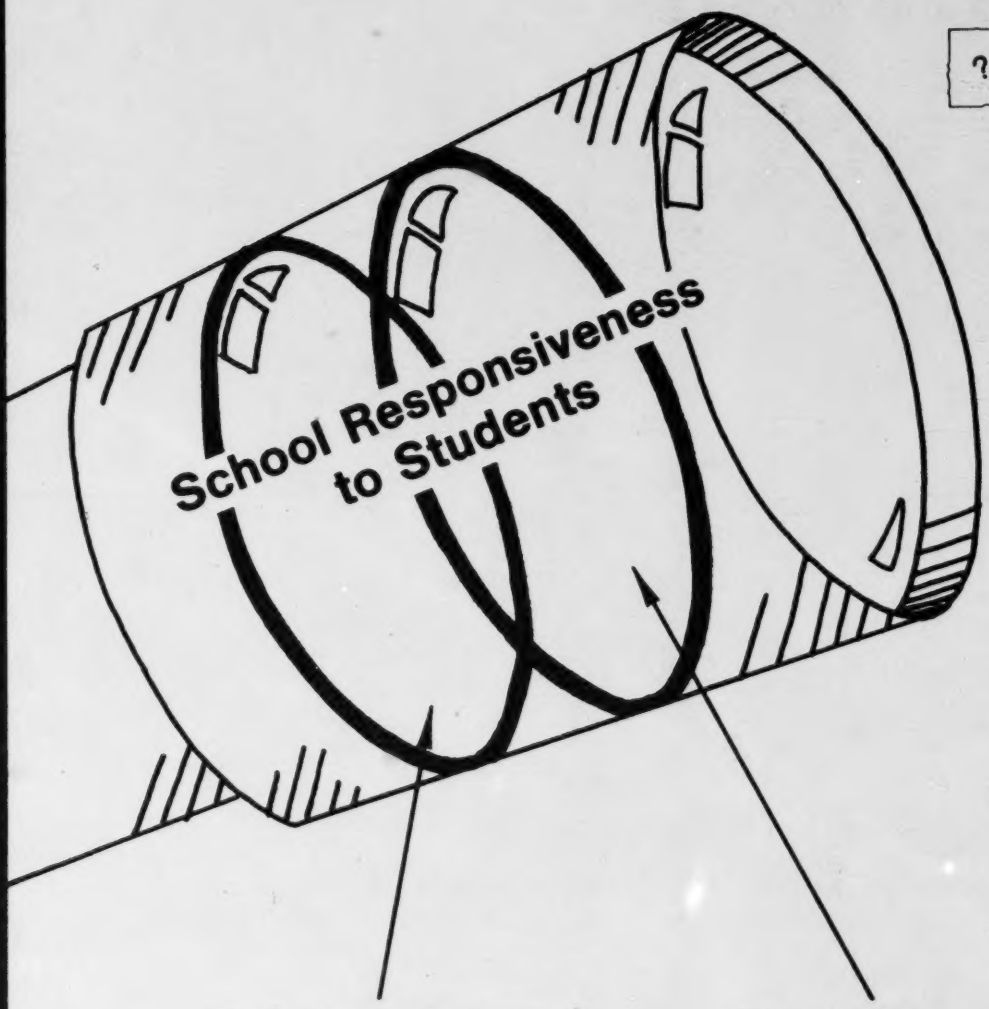
- In addition there are ways in which the school supports the instructional program. Such activities as staff development, parent involvement and education, and student health services are ways of strengthening or reinforcing the use of responsiveness strategies to develop student skills and knowledge.


*Remember these dimensions and their interaction in impacting on the school program. They are the school improvement requirements, and you will use them in planning and in writing your plan.*

# An Analogy: Using a Zoom Lens to Help Plan Your School Program

Since the concepts of school improvement are complex ones, it may be helpful to think of student skills and knowledge and school responsiveness strategies as the lenses of a zoom lens. You use the zoom lens to focus on each part of the school program so that you can plan for improvements in that part. By adjusting the lens, you can zoom in on a specific skill or knowledge, a certain responsiveness technique, or, most important, a combination of several skills, areas of knowledge, and techniques. You can take pictures of small parts of your program, or with a wide-angle lens, you can compare the parts with each other; and you can use the results for planning improvement.

• Multicultural education
• Esteem for self and others/ social and personal responsibility
• Emotional and mental health
• Computation
• Reading
• Writing
• Language
Student Skills and Knowledge
• Consumer economics and career education
• Educational interests
• Critical thinking and independent judgment
• Knowledge (subject matter)




**School Program**

| ? | ? | ? | ? | ? |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Support:**

- Staff development
- Parent involvement and education
- Student health services

- Timely advice about learning options and career opportunities and about school-related problems
- Demonstrate proficiency
- Alternatives in size, composition, and location of learning groups

- Teaching strategies and materials responsive to individual needs
- Continuous progress
- Improvement of school and classroom enviroment
- Providing for students with exceptional abilities or needs

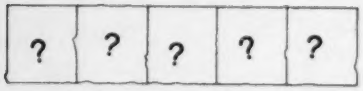
# How to Use the Zoom Lens

## Organizing Your Program for Planning

To use the zoom lens effectively, you will have to start by dividing or choosing divisions of your school program. Remember that even the widest angle can't take in everything you provide for students. The divisions should describe the curriculum and other activities in some way that makes sense to you. There is no single set of divisions that is (or could be) best. Here are some examples.

For instance your school might be organized in such a way that it makes sense to divide your program by:

- Subject and extracurricular areas (e.g., language, art, science, student government, counseling, soccer club)
- Departments (e.g., math and science, English, agriculture, physical education, foreign languages) and extracurricular programs
- Some different divisions (e.g., ecology, technology, energy, communication, life-styles, leisure; or convergent thinking, independent thinking, analytical thinking)




**School Programs**

## Using the Student Skills and Knowledge Lenses

You will be using many different student skills and knowledge lenses of the zoom lens to focus on each division of your program. These include academic, social, and personal skills and knowledge, so you'll need to think about the specific skills and areas of knowledge you want your students to have. Here are some examples.

**The Reading Lens and Other Curricular Areas –**

For instance you'll want students to be able to apply reading skills in order to understand materials they use in all areas of the curriculum. If you zoom in on your program and find that students can't read the social studies textbooks, the manuals in shop classes, or the *T. V. Guide* at home, they obviously have reading problems.

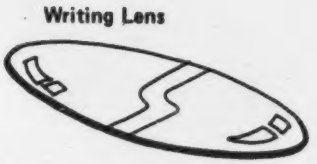
**Reading Lens**

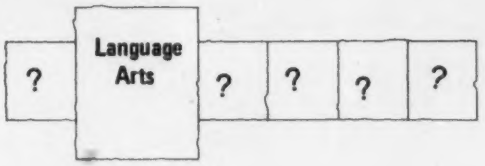
**Curricular Areas**

**The Writing Lens and Language Arts –**

For instance, you may decide that you want students to develop their writing abilities.

If you use this lens to zoom in on language arts and find that few people are teaching writing, you may want to develop a writing clinic or have several groups of teachers or departments develop writing programs.

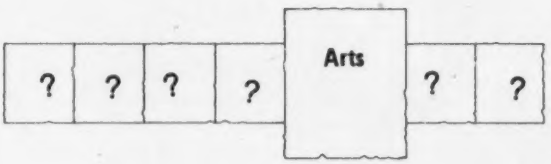



**The Multicultural Lens and the Arts –**

For instance, you may want students to have specific knowledge and awareness that will enable them to function in a multicultural society.

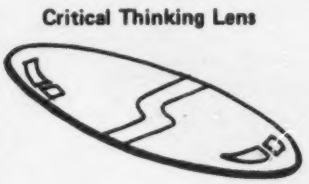
If you zoom in on art and music periods and find that students often stay within their own ethnic or socioeconomic groups, or appreciate only art objects, music, or theater of their own culture, you will want to develop improvement activities.

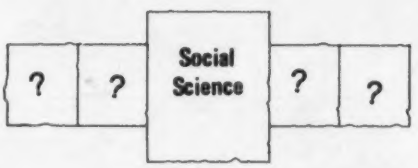



**The Critical Thinking Lens and Social Science –**

For instance, you'll want students to think critically and make independent judgments in their everyday contact with current events.

If you use this lens to zoom in on students in social science classes and find that they can make good arguments on different sides of a social question and then take a position according to their values, you should take note and consider building on what's working.



## Using the School Responsiveness Lenses

You'll need to use the responsiveness lenses to focus on the responsiveness of your program to the skills, abilities, and needs of students. For this you need an understanding of the various responsiveness methods. Here are some examples.

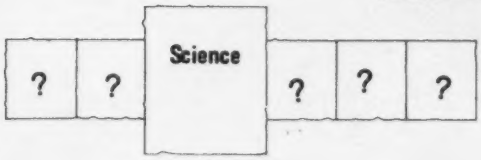
**Continuous Progress Lens**

**The Continuous Progress Lens and Science –**

For instance, you should know that providing for continuous progress includes, but is not limited to, teaching and motivating students with many kinds and levels of ability.

If you use this lens to zoom in on your science program and find that many students are bored, not coming to school, or can't keep up, then you will want to plan for improvement.

If you find that most students are participating actively in class, joining the science club, or completing projects and assignments successfully, you should probably see if the techniques used in science could be used in other parts of the curriculum.



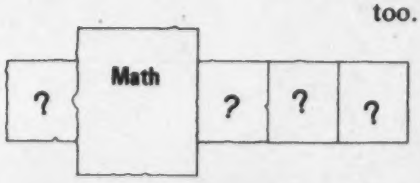

**The Alternative Teaching Strategies Lens and Math –**

For instance, you should know that there are different ways to teach the same thing and that part of school responsiveness is using different teaching strategies in the school program and matching them to the strengths and needs of students.

If you use "alternative teaching strategies" responsiveness lens to zoom in on the math program and find that all instruction at your school is based on explaining a chapter of the math textbook or that students only learn math skills by going to math interest centers, you will want to broaden the teaching strategies for math.

If you find that math instruction is based on teachers' explaining concepts to large groups of students, teachers' working with small groups on specific concepts, teachers' providing for some students to work independently, teachers' presenting real-life or problem-solving situations to help students grasp math concepts, teachers' organizing peer or cross-age tutoring for individual work, and so forth, you should take this lens to another part of the curriculum to see if different teaching strategies are used there too.

**Alternative Teaching Strategies Lens**



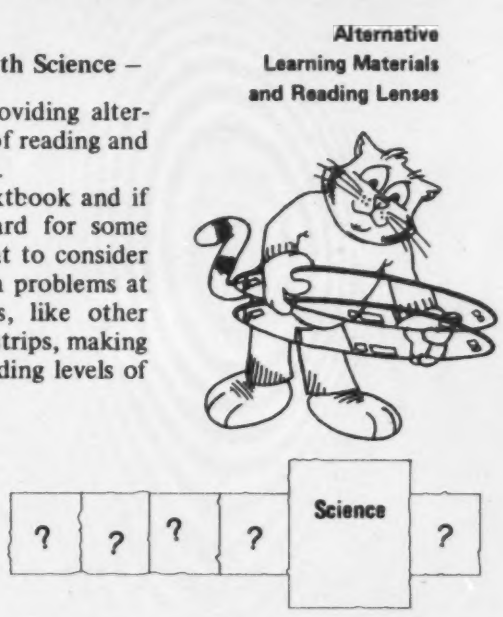
## Using the Student Skills and School Responsiveness Lenses Together

The most important way to use the zoom lens is to put two or more lenses together. This is a little tricky, but think about it because it's probably the best way to plan a comprehensive program.

**Alternative Learning Materials and Reading Lenses with Science –**

For instance, take the responsiveness lens of providing alternative learning materials and the student skills lens of reading and use them together to zoom in on the science program.

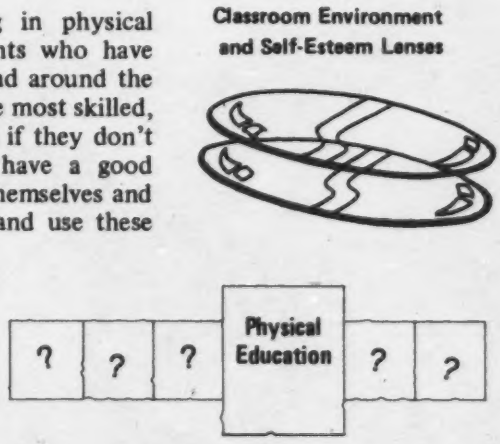
If no materials are used in science besides the textbook and if that textbook is at a reading level that's too hard for some students and no challenge for others, you will want to consider improvements. You might choose to deal with both problems at once by collecting and using additional materials, like other textbooks, magazine articles, library books, and filmstrips, making sure that these more closely match the different reading levels of your students.




**Classroom Environment and Self-Esteem Lenses with Physical Education –**

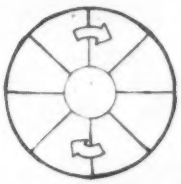
For instance, take the responsiveness lens of improved classroom environment and the student skills lens of esteem for self and others and use them together to zoom in on the physical education program.

If you find that students enjoy participating in physical education, that they all support and help students who have trouble learning skills, that they are willing to spread around the leadership in games, even to students who aren't the most skilled, and that they enjoy being members of a team even if they don't always win, the chances are that you already have a good classroom environment and that students respect themselves and each other. Remember what you've learned here and use these lenses to look at another part of your curriculum.



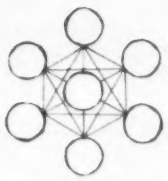
# How Does the Zoom Lens Analogy Relate to the 3 Options?

You may be asking the question above after reading through the last section of this handbook. If so, consider the following relationships:



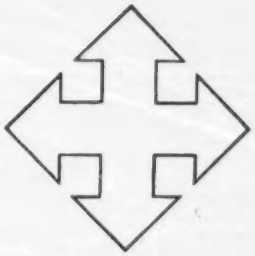
- No matter which planning option you choose, student skills and knowledge, responsiveness strategies, and the parts of the school curriculum should be considered throughout the process. The charts below show the relationships among these and the three options for planning.

| Option 1 | Student Skills and Knowledge | School Responsiveness strategies | ? ? ? ? ? ? ? School Program Divisions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **The Components** | | | The instructional components may be similar to the school program divisions, but if they are, they will probably be broader.<br><br>The instructional support components will be different from these. |
| **Needs Assessment** | Focus on student skills and knowledge during the first three steps of needs assessments in the instructional components. | Include the assessment of school responsiveness strategies in analyzing the discrepancy. | Use these to check that the needs assessment has covered the whole program. |
| **Objectives** | Develop objectives about these for the instructional components. | | |
| **Solution Procedures** | | Solution procedures may be developed around these as well as around other strategies and activities. | Use these to help you determine what changes to initiate and where solution procedures should occur. |
| **Ongoing Planning** | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. |
| **Yearly Evaluation** | Plan to evaluate how well students have acquired these. | Plan to evaluate how well these have worked. | Use these to check how well the strategies have contributed to the development of student skills and knowledge. |



# Option 3

| | Student Skills and Knowledge | School Responsiveness Strategies | School Program Divisions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Outcomes** | Keep student skills and knowledge in mind when developing student outcomes. | | A student outcome can relate to one, some, or all of the school program divisions. |
| **Assessment** | Focus on these during assessment. | Focus on school responsiveness strategies during assessment. | Focus on these during assessment, and use them to make sure you have assessed the interaction of student skills and knowledge and school responsiveness strategies. |
| **Objectives** | Develop objectives about these. | Consider developing objectives about these. | Develop objectives to help you improve the effectiveness of your program in these areas. |
| | An objective may be about both of these. | | |
| **Approaches** | | Approaches may be developed around these, as well as other strategies or activities. | In developing approaches, decide which of these will be a means for reaching each objective. |
| **Ways to Make the Approaches Work** | Consider these when appropriate as you decide how to make each approach work. | Consider these when appropriate as you decide how to make each approach work. | |
| **Ongoing Planning** | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. | Consider questions about these during ongoing planning. |
| **Yearly Evaluation** | Plan to evaluate how well students have acquired these. | Plan to evaluate how well these have worked. | Use these to check how well the strategies have contributed to the development of student skills and knowledge. |



# Option 3

If you use option 3, you will have to determine the relationship of student skills and knowledge, school responsiveness strategies, and the school program divisions to your planning process. It may be helpful to review the relationships for options 1 and 2.

- Remember that sections 52014-52015 of the Education Code say that your planning process for any option must include assessment, objectives, steps or activities, and ongoing evaluation.

- The process of planning and the content of planning are both necessary for school improvement. It makes no sense to plan if you don't have anything to plan for, and it is equally unreasonable to expect specific improvements if you have no way of planning for them.

# SELF-TEST ON HANDBOOK

*Check one response for each item.*

1. The purpose of this handbook is to:

   ☐ a. Give directions for writing a plan.

   ☐ b. Explain the one best planning process.

   ☐ c. Describe three options for planning and give suggestions and ideas to help you choose one and make it work well at your school

   ☐ d. Talk about the contents of school improvement planning.

   ☐ e. Both c and d.

2. Why is a good planning process important to a school?

   ☐ a. It is important because it produces a written plan that will not have to be changed.

   ☐ b. It is important because it helps people make decisions about how to improve the school program for students.

   ☐ c. It is important because it gives people something to do with their leisure time.

3. Schools involved in improving the program would have students who would:

   ☐ a. Mainly learn lots of decoding skills.

   ☐ b. Respect themselves and others who don't go to an improved school.

   ☐ c. Do all their work in school independently.

4. If you use the responsiveness lenses of continuous progress to look at part of the curriculum, you are looking at:

   ☐ a. The variety of teaching strategies that are being used.

   ☐ b. How well students are mastering basic skills.

   ☐ c. How well students with different skills and abilities continue to acquire new skills, knowledge, and insights in that part of the curriculum.

5. If a school has developed its own planning process and has a lot of ideas about how the written plan should be put together, the best planning option would probably be:

   ☐ a. The integrated program option.

   ☐ b. The u-do-it option.

   ☐ c. The component development option.

6. Which of the following is an example of a student outcome for the integrated program option?

   ☐ a. Students will be able to think critically and make independent judgments.

   ☐ b. Each department will identify or develop instructional materials at different reading levels.

   ☐ c. Most students are not able to use written instructions to complete independent activities.

7. Which of the following is an example of an approach for option 2?

   ☐ a. Students will be able to think critically and make independent judgments.

   ☐ b. Each department will identify or develop instructional materials at different reading levels.

   ☐ c. Most students are not able to use written instructions to complete independent activities.

8. Which of the following is an example of assessment information for option 2?

   ☐ a. Students will be able to think critically and make independent judgments.

   ☐ b. Each department will identify or develop instructional materials at different reading levels.

   ☐ c. Most students are not able to use written instructions to complete independent activities.

9. A school might choose the component development option when:

   ☐ a. It wants a planning process that's already laid out step-by-step.

   ☐ b. The A-127 has been used successfully in the past.

   ☐ c. A "discrepancy-based" needs assessment seems appropriate.

   ☐ d. All of the above.

10. What should you do if you think that the component development option (or the integrated program option) would work well for you if only it had some changes?

    ☐ a. Give up.

    ☐ b. Choose it anyway.

    ☐ c. Make the changes and call it the u-do-it option.

**Key to Self-Test**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. e | 6. a |
| 2. b | 7. b |
| 3. c | 8. c |
| 4. c | 9. d |
| 5. b | 10. c |

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